



STRATEGIC HEALTH IT ADVANCED RESEARCH PROJECTS (SHARP) PROGRAM

Facts-At-A-Glance

- Section 3011 of the HITECH Act authorizes immediate funding to strengthen the health information infrastructure of the United States and promote adoption of health information technology (health IT) across the country.
- Under that authority, the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) has announced the availability of \$60 million in funding for the Strategic Health IT Advanced Research Projects (SHARP) Program.
- Applicants for the SHARP Program must be a U.S.-based public or private institution of higher education or, other public or private institution or organization with a research mission.
- The SHARP Program will include focused research in areas where breakthrough advances are needed to address barriers to the adoption of health IT to meet the goal of making electronic health records (EHRs) available for all Americans by 2014.
- Each project within the SHARP Program will implement a research program addressing one of the following four research focus areas:
 1. **Security of Health Information Technology:** This research area addresses the challenges of developing security and risk mitigation policies and the technologies necessary to build and preserve the public trust as health IT systems become ubiquitous.
 2. **Patient-Centered Cognitive Support:** This research area addresses the challenge of harnessing the power of health IT so that it integrates with, enhances, and supports clinicians' reasoning and decision making, rather than forcing them into a mode of thinking that is natural to machines but not to people.
 3. **Healthcare Application and Network Platform Architectures:** This research area focuses on the development of new and improved architectures that are necessary to achieve electronic exchange and use of health information in a secure, private, and accurate manner.
 4. **Secondary Use of EHR Data:** This research area focuses on strategies to enhance the use of health IT in improving the overall quality of health care.
- The SHARP Program awardees will select areas of research from the four focus areas and implement a research agenda addressing specific goals of HITECH and the challenges to adoption and meaningful use of health IT.
- ONC expects to award four cooperative agreements for a four-year project period to qualified applicants. Progress for each project will be evaluated every year.

- Projects will be guided by a two part mission:
 1. Implementing a collaborative, interdisciplinary program of research addressing short- and long-term challenges in one of four focus areas;
 2. Developing and implementing a cooperative program between health IT stakeholders – researchers, patient groups, health care providers and others – to transition the research findings into practice.
- Optional, though recommended, Letters of Intent are due on January 8, 2010.
- Applications are due on January 25, 2010. Award decisions for the SHARP Program are anticipated in March 2010 with program start dates in April 2010, lasting for a four-year period.

Additional information is available at <http://HealthIT.HHS.Gov/SHARP>.